



The Office Of State Treasurer  
Denise L. Nappier

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## News

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **CHET ORGANIZES DONATION PROGRAM FOR YOUTH TO RECEIVE 1,200 BACKPACKS**

**HARTFORD, CT** – Bridgeport youth from the Summer Lighthouse Program enjoyed a day at Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo today and received a special visit from Connecticut State Treasurer Denise L. Nappier as she joined several state officials for the Sixth Annual Backpack Donation Program sponsored by the Connecticut Higher Education Trust (CHET).



Treasurer Nappier serves as Trustee of CHET, which distributed 225 backpacks to students in grades kindergarten through fourth grade in Bridgeport's Summer Lighthouse Program.

As she spoke to the students, Treasurer Nappier encouraged them to do well in school in order to go to college so one day they might become “a lawyer or a police officer or a mayor or even a state treasurer.”

Workers who graduate from college make a million dollars more in their careers than those without a degree, Treasurer Nappier said. “And who wants to make a million dollars?”, she asked. Every hand went up.

The State Treasurer's Office is distributing a total of 1,200 backpacks across the state in partnership with the State Department of Children and Families (DCF) and community non-profits. In addition, employees of the Office of the State Treasurer, Department of Economic & Community Development, and Office of the State Comptroller are coordinating donation efforts within their respective agencies. Also attending the event were State Comptroller Kevin Lembo and DCF Deputy Commissioner Michael Williams. Bridgeport Mayor Bill Finch welcomed the students.

“The CHET Backpack Donation Program is designed to help make back-to-school time more affordable for Connecticut families in need,” said Treasurer Nappier. “Back-to-school supplies cost more every year. In some cases, children go to school without the basic tools they need. This program is designed to give children the resources needed to excel in school, as well as provide information to families on the importance of saving early for future higher education expenses.”

Comptroller Kevin Lembo said, “Every child deserves to begin their school year fully equipped for academic success, regardless of their family or financial circumstances. I am incredibly grateful for these generous donations today to ensure that every Connecticut child has the chance to start their school year on the right foot.”

The students visiting the Beardsley Zoo were excited to receive vibrant backpacks filled with notebooks, folders, pencils, crayons, and other essential back-to-school supplies. The backpacks even included a piggy bank to encourage saving for college and a brochure about CHET.

“It’s an honor to partner with State Treasurer Nappier and CHET,” said Mark Harp, Site Monitor of Bridgeport’s Lighthouse Program. “These backpacks are a big help to the students’ families and because of this program our kids will be able to start the school year off on the right foot with all the basics they need for academic success.”

The Lighthouse Program provides students with a safe and supportive environment after school during the academic year, and an enrichment program during the summer that includes educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities for 2,500 youth.

### ***Treasurer’s Office To Give Out Additional Backpacks in August***

The State Treasurer’s Office and DCF will distribute 600 backpacks in August. DCF supports thousands of disadvantaged families and children across the state with social and economic services. The state agency will distribute the backpacks through its regional offices located in Bridgeport, Hartford, Danbury, New Haven, Meriden and Waterbury.

Also, CHET will donate approximately 425 backpacks to community non-profit organizations.

The Backpack Donation Program is one of CHET’s initiatives to support local communities in Connecticut. With the help of organizations like Bridgeport’s Lighthouse Program, DCF and other organizations, CHET continues to support programs that promote education and financial literacy throughout the state.

“Thanks to CHET, youth throughout Connecticut are receiving basic tools like pencils, notebooks and folders that they will use to blossom into bright young students today and Connecticut’s economic engines in the future,” Treasurer Nappier said of the donation program.

### **About CHET**

The Connecticut Higher Education Trust (CHET) direct-sold college savings plan was established in 1997 and as of June 30, 2015 has grown to more than \$2.4 billion in assets and 101,280 accounts. On top of that figure, more than \$1 billion has been withdrawn from CHET accounts to help more than 31,000 students pay for college expenses.

The State of Connecticut offers CHET to help families save for future college costs. Funds deposited into a CHET account have tax advantages and can be used at accredited colleges

and universities across the country, including vocational and technical schools, and some colleges abroad.

Connecticut residents are allowed to deduct CHET contributions from their state income taxes – up to \$5,000 for an individual or up to \$10,000 for a married couple filing jointly. Investment earnings are exempt from state and federal taxes if used for qualified educational expenses.

CHET is an investment vehicle, not merely a savings plan. It offers fourteen investment options, allowing participants to select an option or combination of options that best fit their higher education saving needs and investment philosophy. Options vary depending on the age of the beneficiary and the participant's tolerance for risk.

For more information about CHET, visit [www.aboutchet.com](http://www.aboutchet.com) or call the customer service center at (866) 314-3939. Find us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/CHETcollegesavings) (facebook.com/CHETcollegesavings) or follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/CHET529) (@CHET529).

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